

Alison Austin: Austin Chiropractic Center

How did you get started?

My brother opened his chiropractic office in San Diego, Calif., in 2001. At that time I was working as a project development manager at an Internet start-up company called Active.com in La Jolla, Calif. After seeing his passion for helping people get healthy and stay healthy I decided to follow in his footsteps. As much as I loved Active.com I did not want to spend the rest of my life in front of a computer. I wanted to create a lifestyle that allowed me to work helping people. I packed my bags and headed off for Palmer Chiropractic College in San Jose, Calif.

What should people know about you and your business?

I help patients of all ages including athletes, children and pregnant women. My purpose is to educate and motivate families toward optimal health using natural chiropractic care and lifestyle changes such as proper stretching and hydration. In addition to spinal and extremity adjustments I also use therapeutic exercises and soft tissue treatments to work on damaged or weak muscles, ligaments and tendons. One of the most effective soft tissue solutions is the Graston Technique. Using one of six stainless steel tools allows me to detect and remove scar tissue and adhesions that are present in soft tissue due to acute or repetitive stress injuries. We also have three phenomenal massage therapists who offer everything from stress relief to deep tissue work.

What is the best business advice you ever received?

People love to buy but hate to be sold. This is why I offer different programs and customize each one based on patient needs and goals. I never "sell" my patients; I ask questions and help them make an informed decision. There are different reasons why people receive my services: 1. relief care is a short-term plan where we treat symptoms to help people feel better temporarily; 2. corrective care is a longer program where we treat causes, not just temporary symptom relief; 3. maintenance care is minimum frequency of visits to keep someone's symptoms from resurfacing; and 4. wellness care is preventative visits scheduled on each individual's needs.

Tell us a memorable story about your business.

Two examples help to illustrate the variety of people I can help. One is a 60-year-old avid runner. He had not been able to run in almost a year due to foot pain (plantar fasciitis). After several visits using the Graston Technique and adjusting his foot and ankle, he was able to get back out on the road. Four years later he is still running and comes in only for preventative visits. The second example is working with a 6-year-old girl who had been suffering from constipation. The mom had been working with her primary-care physician (PCP) and they had tried different medications and supplements. After several months of no progress the PCP suggested to the mother that they try chiropractic care. After a few office visits where I worked to reduce spasms in the girl's low back paraspinal muscles and gently adjusting her lumbar spine, her mom reported successful results.

Tell us about a mistake you made in business. What did you learn from it?

When I first open my door in Duxbury, I tried to do everything at the office. Managing phones, billing, scheduling, patient paperwork and everything else that a business requires took away from my time and focus on my patients. It was difficult for me to delegate to others, but in doing so I have been able to focus on patient care and growing my business.

If you could wave a magic wand and make any change in your industry that you wanted, what would it be?

There has always been division within the chiropractic profession that holds the profession back as a whole. I would have every chiropractor come together and join a singular organization like the AMA (American Medical Association) and ADA (American Dental Association). Sometimes people have a vague perspective about what chiropractic is due to the variety of different techniques and approaches. Also I would wave the magic wand and change the focus of care in this country from sickness care to true wellness care. Then everyone would be properly educated about the power that daily exercise, proper nutrition and stress management have on their health. Many cases of obesity, heart disease, diabetes, high cholesterol, hypertension and insomnia are lifestyle related conditions that we overmedicate for. Each of us are responsible to take an active role in managing our own and our children's health.

Alison Austin, of Austin Chiropractic Center, 33 Railroad Ave. in Duxbury.

What's the best thing about your job?

I love to see people feel hope and become empowered to take control of their health, to see people recover from painful injuries and conditions they thought were permanent. I get to meet new people every day and become part of their new and improved lifestyle.

So how's business these days, anyway?

Business is good right now. I see it getting even better as I work in the community and offer Health & Wellness workshops. I have spoken in school classrooms, adult living communities and to youth sports teams. I am available to talk about a variety of health related topics from the importance of stretching to stress management. If you know anyone who is not happy about their health, feeling stressed or groups that would like to learn more about their health, then please have them call my office.

Austin Chiropractic Center, 781-934-0020, is located at 33 Railroad Ave. (just down the street from Far Fars) and online at www.DuxburyWellness.com.

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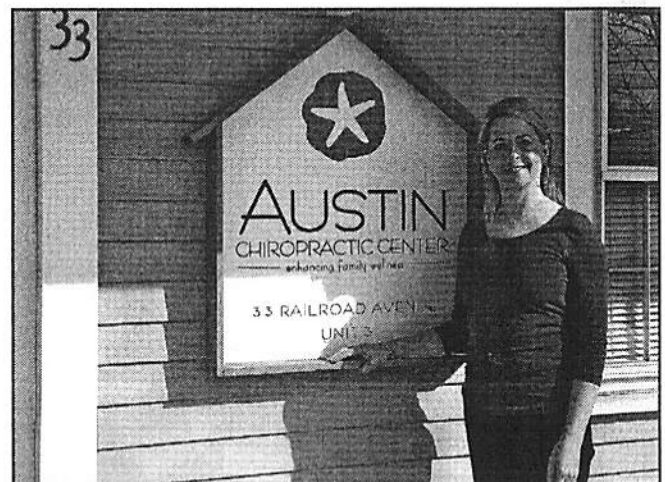


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